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AN
ESSAY^K
ON THE DIFFERENT
NATURAL SITUATIONS
OF
GARDENS.

LONDON:

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CARDEN

LONDON

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W. & A. GILBERT

A N

ESSAY, &c.

EVERY work of art proposes for its end either utility, or along with utility, the raising certain pleasing sentiments in the human mind. Works, which propose the last end for their aim, have most dignity in them; and therefore the arts, by which they are produced, have a higher appellation. When we speak of an art, in which mere utility is intended, we term it a mechanical art; when we speak of an art, which joins utility to pleasure, we call it one of the fine arts.

The art of laying out gardens has within a little more than a hundred years in Europe, and within a much less time in Great Britain, started up from being one of the former, to be one of the latter species of these arts. In

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all ages men have known the use of fruits, flowers, and herbs for the pleasure of the senses: it is almost only in our age, that they have introduced into Gardens one half of the pleasing objects of art and nature for the entertainment of the imagination.

As one of the ends of all the fine arts consists in raising certain pleasing sentiments in the human mind; so it seems to be an essential requisite of these sentiments, that they should not only have each of them something precise and characteristical; but that they should have likewise some common alliance among themselves. The first bar of a piece of music, the first row of pillars in a house, or the first movement of a dance, all determine the particular cadence, elevation or measure of the different wholes, of which each makes a part.

In this respect the art of laying out Gardens has not as yet arrived at the same degree of taste, to which some of the other arts have. Many Gardens contain a disposition of grounds and an assemblage of objects, which create many pleasing sentiments in the mind; but it has scarce been the aim of any Gardener to raise a train of precise characteristical sentiments upon the view of different dispositions of grounds.

There seem in nature to be four different dispositions

O N G A R D E N S.

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tions of grounds distinct from each other; and which create distinct and separate sentiments.

1. The first situation is that of a high-land country; consisting of great and steep mountains, rocks, lakes, impetuous rivers, &c. Such a place is Inverary.

The sentiment, which a situation like this creates in the breast of a beholder, is obviously, and every one feels it, that of grandeur.

2. The next is what one may call a romantic disposition of grounds, consisting of sunk vallies, woods hanging over them, smooth rivers, the banks steep but accessible, and the rocks appearing high, not so much from their own height, as from the trees which crown, and the wild birds which are continually hovering over them. Such a situation is generally destitute of prospect; but then in return, both the whole and the parts of it being precisely marked, give the same room to the imagination of the gardener, that they give to the landskip-painter. Places like this we have on the banks of many of our small rivers in the low countries of Scotland.

The sentiment, which such a situation seems to flatter, is that of composure of mind; and perhaps even of melancholy.

3. A third disposition is that of grounds, running by gentle falls and risings easily into each other. In situations of this kind are placed many of the English modern Gardens: and particularly, those, which Kent delighted in laying out. Such a situation, as it is generally attended with great verdure, cultivation and populousness, naturally creates in the mind that sentiment of chearfulness, which society and action are apt to create.

4. The last situation is that of a dead flat. A situation of this last kind may, from its verdure, or from its extent, or from its contrast with other grounds, that surround it, create some particular sentiment; but merely considered in itself, it appears to create little or none.

Nature not only creates these different sentiments upon the view of these different situations, but also creates a love and attachment for one or other of them, according to the different tempers of men. A man who is fond of great projects, or great exploits, or who has an high regard for the splendor of his ancestors, will love the first situation. The ancient nobility and gentry of Wales and Scotland are observed to be fond, beyond the rest of mankind, of their seats. A man in misfortunes will naturally retire to the second situation: and for this reason many of the convents abroad are observed to be built in such places. A chearful, gay temper will naturally love the
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third. And a person of no taste or feeling will as readily be pleased with the sameness, and (if I may use the expression) the uninterestedness of the last situation. The phlegm of a citizen is as much seen in cutting down the pleasing inequalities of ground, and throwing his whole garden into the dead flat of a bowling-green; as the love of art, and show, and expence of Louis the XIV. is to be seen in the unnatural wonders of Versailles.

Now as nature has created these sentiments upon the view of these situations; and farther, has created a love in different tempers for one or other of them; it should appear to be the perfection of art, to second these her operations. For these reasons the natural objects must be heightened in such a manner, as to mark more distinctly the peculiar genius of the situation, where it has one; and next, the artificial objects must be such, as create sentiments similar to those, which are created by it.

This last rule admits only of this one exception; that when the sentiment, created by the natural situation, is not agreeable in itself, the aim of the objects, brought into it, ought to be to soften and temper the sentiment.

The objects, either artificial or natural, which enter into the composition of a Garden, are chiefly four; buildings, grounds, water, and planting.

Let us now observe of what use these instruments may be made, according to the four capital situations in nature.

F I R S T S I T U A T I O N.

THE slenderness of an Ionic or Corinthian pillar, placed at the side of a vast mountain, would create a ridiculous comparison: and therefore in a high-land situation the principal house should be in the form of a castle. The elegance and fineness of execution, belonging to the Grecian architecture, would be here totally misplaced. If in that castle, added to the greatness and solid appearance of the main building, there should shoot up in the middle a Gothic tower, pierced, and of hardy execution; a sentiment, similar to the sentiment of terror, added to that of grandeur, would still more correspond to the natural genius of the place. The other buildings through the Garden should correspond to this one; they should have that greatness and hardiness in

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them, which the Gothic architecture, above all others, gives. If a bridge is to be built, it should consist of one vast, bold arch, instead of two or three elegant small ones: and if it has one or two ornaments, it should have no more. The other buildings through the Garden should in general be rather of the square, than of the round form: this last form having in it too much of elegance and lightness. But as the sameness of continual squares would tire; buildings consisting of many sides have not the elegance of the round, and yet, along with the solidity of the square form, have a kind of magic appearance, that perhaps is more corresponding to the nature of the sentiment to be raised, than this last form itself.

Of the effect of these many-sided squares, there is a fine instance in Mr. Aislaby's Gothic Octagon, when surveyed from the low part of the Garden at Studley. Tho' the Gothic architecture should in such a place be in general preferred to the Grecian, yet in particular spots it may be improper: in that case the Doric, or even the more rustic Tuscan order, would be proper to supply its place. The disposition of planting and water should correspond to the same greatness of matter and manner in the buildings. If a piece of water is to be made, it should be a lake, not a pond: it should be thrown into one great sheet, like the lake at Blenheim, in an agreeable

able and natural shape, but without symmetry; instead of being split into a dozen basins, and those of whimsical forms, like Mr. Aislaby's at Studley. The rapidity and noise of the rivers should be increased by artificial bulwarks and impediments, as is done at Inverary: and the falls of water should, either by the interposition of rocks, or the bringing of new streams over them, be made to look more like cataracts than cascades. If a plantation is to be made, it should cover the whole side and top of a mountain; it should consist of the great forest trees. Such of the exotic evergreens, as will grow there, will particularly add to the uncouth appearance of the place: and they should all be planted irregularly. As there should be a greatness in the quantity of the plantation, so there should be a greatness in the view of particular trees: and therefore wherever there is a tree remarkably large, all the other trees should be cleared out round it, and some art used to draw the eye towards it; that the spectator may be amazed, not only with the greatness of the whole distribution of objects, but with the grandeur of the particular objects themselves. Though every one will allow, that strait lines, whether of trees or water, are contrary to the freedom of this situation, yet there is so much state in the approach to a great house by a great avenue, that we almost imagine a great avenue to be a necessary appanage to a Gothic house: the constant custom of seeing them together too, makes us more easily yield
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to that notion. Perhaps other contrivances in planting might be fallen upon to preserve the state of approach ; and yet to avoid the stiffness and symmetry of a regular avenue. There is an attempt of this kind in the walk to the Gothic tower at Clermont ; but it is awkwardly executed. It consists of an avenue between two thickets ; the outlines of which towards the avenue run in a serpentine line : and the trees of the line which shoot farthest into the walk make the avenue. But as the trees are thick planted, as the curves are of one measure, and as the outer trees are at too regular distances, it has the effect of a double symmetry ; one, of the regular serpentine lines, and another, of the regular straight line ; by this means it has all the stiffness of an ordinary avenue, and none of its majesty. But whatever may be said in favour of the straight line in an avenue to such a house ; nothing surely can be said in defence of the straight line of any length in the conduct of water in such a situation. The water there, instead of going in a long straight line, or in the small serpentine, should go on in irregular sweeps ; sometimes rushing for some little space with fury in the straight line, and at other times resting itself, as it were, in the calmer curve.

The chief natural defect of a high-land situation is, that being generally ill inhabited, it has too much the appearance of dead life : that appearance, added to the vastness

of the objects, creates a kind of despair in the mind ; which considers itself as nothing, amidst that stupendous and solitary scene it beholds. In a chearful situation it does not seem so necessary to call the mind to objects of life ; the gay appearance of the ground there, creates that entwining sentiment, which in an high-land situation must be borrowed from the introduction of the objects of life. We think with a kind of pleasure on living in Juan de Fernandes or Tinian, though there was not a living soul in these islands : but we think with horror of living all alone in the pass of Killecranky, or the braes of Lochaber. For this reason, all the improvements made upon natural objects, and all other objects of art brought into such a garden, ought to have a relation to, and call the mind to the remembrance of living objects.

In this light the view of the castle on the top of Dunquoch, at Inverary, has a much finer effect, than that of a ruin in such a place could have had. And the thought of the building over the spring in the way to Essen Hossen, which has a relation to use and life, has a much better effect, than even a temple in such a place to any imaginary deity could have.

For the same reason, in such a situation, whatever buildings are erected, should be in conspicuous places, to create a notion of life and populousness : and to make them still
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the more observable, they should be of a very white colour, and supported by a body of green behind to give them the more relief.

Though the little finishings of art on the face of the ground would in such a situation be lost, yet the great efforts of art would please; because that very art is a sign of cultivation and populousness. For which reason, though it would be lost labour to smooth much or to raise gentle unevennesses on this ground, yet it would be proper to give it the highest degree of verdure it is capable of; and wherever the ground naturally forms itself into a concave or convex form, that concave or convex should be increased or marked by all the assistance of art. There is scarce a nobler appearance whatever, than that of a natural amphitheatre, whether of grass or wood. Box-hill in Surry for the convex form, the banks of the lake at Blenheim for the drest concave; and a great sweep of wood in the way to Effen Hossen for the uncultivated concave; are the noblest examples I have any where seen.

From the same desire of shewing the great efforts of art, the tops of the mountains should be covered with planting. There is nothing more desolate and dreary than the top of one of our mountains*: covering it with a plantation will take off from that appearance. In our climate, trees

* In Scotland.

feldom grow naturally on the tops of mountains; and therefore when we see them, we readily guess, they are the produce of art. To point out this more strongly, if the top of a mountain run into a ridge, we might plant it in clumps detached obviously by art from each other; or if it run to a point, we might make the plantation in the form of a regular circle.

For the same reason, that objects relating to life should be introduced into this situation, and that the appearance of the great efforts of art should not be totally concealed, particular care should be taken to mark and throw open all the natural cascades. These, though they have not a relation to human life, yet by their motion and sound rouse and animate the attention from that stupor, which the view of great and dreary objects create. These are a fine gradation of inanimate objects up almost into objects of life: a barren hill has a very dead appearance; covered with waving woods it has a more animated show: but if a cascade is seen tumbling down that hill through these woods, it becomes still more enlivened.

I have been told, that in the dreariest situations in Switzerland, some of the gentlemen have by the management of the water, given a vivacity to the face of their country, which our gayest gardens have not. Any one will be ready to believe this, who has gone through the walk

walk of Effen Hossen. In the lower part of the walk there have been great stones thrown of design into the brook; in the upper part there have been none. The consequence of this difference is, that the under part is infinitely more animated and agreeable than the upper part.

The two best landskip painters in the world, Nicholas Poussin and Salvator Rosa, both delighted in painting the great scenes of nature: but they took different routs. Salvator Rosa chose terrible and noble natural situations: but his trees were scathed with thunder or blown over with storms: his grass was arid, his streams not rushing down hills, but stagnant in pools: no view of houses, and scarce any of life was to be seen. A raven perched on the trunk of a tree, a magician reading under the shade of a mountain, the murder of a traveller amidst rocks by robbers, were the only signs of life in his landscapes. Poussin, on the other hand, added all the beauties of verdure, all the vivacity of water to his great situations: and interspersed amongst them not only living objects, but on the bottoms and sides of the hills, views of temples and palaces of a Babylonish architecture; which by their uncouth appearance correspond to the sentiment he meant to create. In the situation of the one we can suppose a philosopher or a hero to have lived; the situation of the other we cannot suppose any thing but a demon to have inhabited.

inhabited. Perhaps the landscapes of Pouffin are the best instructor, which a gardener of genius and taste can follow for this first branch of the natural division of grounds.

S E C O N D

S I T U A T I O N.

THE next situation is, what I may be allowed to call a romantic one. The sentiment to be created by it is that of composure of mind, or perhaps even of melancholy.

The view of a high-land country, if desart, creates a disagreeable horror; the view of a romantic situation, if retired, creates an agreeable one. The cause of the difference is this; in a very great situation the country is so vast, as to bear no proportion to a single person. He is sensible of the comparison, and when alone falls into a kind of despair: whereas in a romantic, retired situation, the parts not being so great, there is no disproportion betwixt it and the single inhabitant. He is apt to consider it, as no more than subservient to him; and that thought, with the natural melancholy, which such a situation creates in him, makes him desire to see no other person in it.

For that reason, in the first high-land disposition of grounds, it was necessary to call the mind to life and motion; but in this romantic situation, on the contrary, it is proper to compose the mind, to remove it in a good measure from both. For this reason, the views of ruins are much more proper for this situation, than those of houses intended for use. At the same time, as it is necessary to have buildings of the latter kind, they ought to be of the Gothic architecture. With regard to the architecture of ruins, they are full as proper to be of the Grecian form: for as nothing is more chearful than the elegance of a Grecian building, when entire; so scarce any thing strikes with a more pleasing melancholy, than such a building in ruins: its once gay condition making its present state more mournful. The buildings, which are not intended for use, should be such as are subservient to the purposes either of religion, or of grief; as a cloyster, a chapel, a spire, a hermitage, or a pyramid; a monument, an obelisk, &c. With regard to the colour of all these buildings, it ought to be far from the dazzling white of the buildings in the former situation. Stone of a dark colour, or brick would perhaps be more proper: but as these, particularly the last, are disagreeable, the dazzling of the stone might be concealed by the mounting of ivy or moss along the walls.

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Corresponding to the same taste as in the buildings, the plantations should consist of evergreen groves; and the trees be set very near to each other. Our ancestors, the Druids, inhabited thick groves. One of the finest passages in Lucan, is the religious horror which seized Cæsar's army in cutting down a sacred grove; and all the magical descriptions of Tasso pass in such places. The closeness of the trees to each other will produce a melancholy whistling of the wind, which the more open method of planting does not. Those trees should be planted in the quincunx order; and sometimes produce long straight walks, with broad and high arches at the top, like the inside of a Gothic cathedral. The quincunx order in planting, from the sameness never rouses the attention, except on the first sight; and a long arched walk, from its dimness, and length, and height, composes the mind at once to meditations; at the same time that the simplicity of its figure prevents the mind from being ever disturbed in them.

To these solemn walks the river should be made to contribute a solemn silence. For this reason it should be protected from the winds. All obstructions should be removed from the course of its current: and it should be deepened, and made to run more smooth than it naturally is inclined to do. It should be made to lose itself at the end in a thick wood. The fancy naturally pierces into these recesses, and follows the river with awe in its
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unknown course. For the same reason, the silent river should be shaded with trees hanging over it. All the world is sensible of the beauty of the weeping willow hanging over a smooth stream, so that the banks of it cannot be seen. There was a fine instance of the beauty of this on the banks of Mr. Pelham's serpentine river at Esler; but as most of that place was intended for cheerfulness, these willows are now cut down, and the banks smoothed into a more cheerful green.

I am sensible that the straight line, especially in water, is almost always disagreeable; yet if that line be at all pardonable, perhaps it is pardonable here. The serpentine line contains so great variety, as to disturb the mind continually in its meditations; whereas a melancholy mind is flattered in its indolence by sauntering along the sides of a canal, that is always the same. For the same reason the small streams should be made to run purling over pebbles: and the cascades should be made to fall in one regular sheet; instead of being broken by obstructions. It is generally thought, that cascades create an enlivening sentiment; and no doubt they do, when they are left to their own natural irregularity, or when that irregularity is increased: but when they are brought over in regular sheets, the continued sameness of the noise, and motion, and look, composes the mind too to an even continued tenour of thought. We love to read or sleep by the side

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of a purling brook or a smooth cascade; but we are roused, as at the sound of a trumpet, by the sight of a rough cataract.

It is difficult to give directions for the management of the ground in such a situation. Smoothing into a flat is always against taste; and yet perhaps here it would flatter the indolence of the mind. Nature at least seems to favour this, by generally throwing the bottoms of such situations into a flat: and surely throwing the ground into pleasing irregularities would amuse too much. The wide bottoms, which should be exposed in a high-land situation, should here be concealed: nor should the open lawns of a cheerful situation be admitted. The best disposition is to throw the ground into smooth walks, following the course of the waters and hills. A solitary walk in a deep valley, by the side of a smooth water, and covered by the shades of the neighbouring hills and woods, is the very region of melancholy.

On the banks of the high parts of the Maize in France, I have seen convents, around which, not surely from the rules of art or taste, but merely from the natural feelings of mankind, almost every rule here mentioned has been followed.

T H I R D
S I T U A T I O N.

THE third situation is that of a champain, rich country, and full of gentle inequalities.

Such a country is perhaps the most agreeable: it is generally the best cultivated. The sentiment it creates, is cheerfulness; and therefore in a garden in this country the disposition and assemblage should be such, as may still farther carry on the sentiment. Perhaps, instead of all other rules for such a situation, it would be enough to say, that Kent, who beyond all others loved and made use of it, should be studied and followed.

That great designer made the grounds to rise and fall more gently into one another, than even in such a situation they are naturally inclined to do: for this purpose he deepened the sinkings, and raised the swellings of the natural inequalities: these he made to consist of winding surfaces, continually varying in their figures, lengths, and heights. The chief beauty of this situation lies in its numerous inequalities: and therefore to mark those the better, on the tops of the small unevennesses he planted

single trees, and on the summits of the rising grounds clumps of them : but, in the slopes of the one, or on the sides of the other, neither single trees nor clump were to be seen. The sinking of the first, and the sides of these last, on the contrary, he smoothed into the finest shaven turf. All the rich prospects of the country he threw open, so as to make them in a manner a part of the garden. If a walk was to be led along a summit, he made it run in the form of an open terrace, to command all the prospects around ; if to the top of a hill, he led the walk mounting round the whole of it, so as to make the prospect vary at almost every step. If it was to be led along a river, he ordered it to run in a careless line betwixt the banks of the river on the one hand, and a line of trees, flowers, and flowering shrubs, equally careless on the other. To make the carelessness of both appear stronger too, the walk sometimes quitted the river altogether, and lost itself in a thicket ; and the line of planting, on its part again, sometimes ran betwixt the walk and the river ; and at other times made a stop, and left a vacuity altogether. But this walk, careless and undesigned as it seemed, continually led to some building, or place of repose, or lake with an island in it, joined to the land by a Chinese bridge.

The river, if of a size to be under command, he led along in the same easy manner, in the serpentine form : sometimes losing itself behind a thicket, and sometimes in the

the appearance of a lake ; but for the most part keeping its own pleasing meander. Where there was a considerable sweep, he planted a tree of a fine form at the point of ground running into the water, in order to mark that point more strongly. The banks of the river he sometimes adorned with a small temple, sometimes with a grotto ; and at other times with a neat but elegant cottage : in the designs of which last building, he was lucky beyond all others.

The most beautiful way for a river, such as this, to lose itself, would be under a Palladian bridge ; supported behind by a grove of evergreens, planted of different heights above each other. The best serpentine river for its size, I have seen, is that of Lord Burlington ; and the best decorations of such a river are those of the Elysian fields of Lord Cobham.

The planting in such a place should consist of trees of the most beautiful forms and colours, both of the home and exotic kinds. They should be planted in the loose and open manner, so that both the beauty of each particular tree, and the beauty of the ground they cover, may be seen : or if the particular roughness of a hill forces the Gardener to plant them in thickets, he should, if possible, make the colours run into, and lose themselves in each other, like the dies of a rainbow. As this is the situation in which the beauty of single trees may be best seen ; so it
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is here chiefly that the connoisseur in the science of trees should exert his knowledge and taste.

The buildings should consist mostly of the Chinese and Grecian architecture; and in the latter the simplicity and elegance of the Ionic order should be preferred to the others. A Chinese building on the summit of a hill, not only agrees to the airy situation of the place, but carries our thoughts to the sultry climates of China: a Grecian temple on the side of a hill, or on the banks of a river, transports our fancy to the temperate and delightful valleys and mounts of old Greece.

F O U R T H

S I T U A T I O N.

THE last situation is that of a dead flat. And as such a situation of itself raises little or no sentiment; so the whole fancy of the Gardener should be employed in carrying the thought, by the parade of art, from attending to this defect of nature. The perfection of the other Gardens lay in following nature: there is often a necessity in this one of going directly against her. And as art in the others was, for the most part, to be concealed; so here
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on the contrary it is sometimes with affectation to be exposed.

The English in such a situation attempt to humour nature; the French in such a situation attempt to hide her. The first, from their too great love for her, expose even her weakness; the last, from their contempt of her, conceal even her beauties. If these tastes were to make concessions to each other, perhaps the point of perfection might be betwixt the two.

In a small flat, the serpentine river, the open planting, the lake and island, the moulding the flat into the gentle unevennesses of Kent, have a rural and chearful aspect: of this last particularly, there is a fine instance in Kent's plantation at the back of the house at Chiswick, compared with the phlegmatic plantation of Bridgeman on the same side of the garden.

But these contrivances, though proper for a small plain, are too few and simple for a great one. There repetition tires; by their openness too they make us more sensible of the greatness of the flat, and of the defect of nature. For which reason, though there may be proper contrivances to join the different parts of the garden together; yet there is no help for it, we must frankly call in the assistance of art to make the chief parts of the Garden. For this reason bosquets, statues, vases, trees cut into great arches, jets
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d'eau, cascades forced up and made to tumble down an hundred steps, regular basons, peristiles, temples, long vistas, the star plantation, &c. are in taste here. All the magnificence of Versailles, without its conceits or its too often repeated symmetry, should be admitted. To supply the defect of natural prospect the walks should terminate in artificial vistas : and in this light, perhaps, even painted cascades and buildings, as practised by some of our English Gardeners, if pardonable any where, are pardonable here. To get too, as far as can be, the advantage of natural prospects, the artificial mounts of the flat Dutch gardens should here be introduced : and even, to create the appearance of such mounts, where there are none, the trees should in some places be planted in clumps or in avenues ; the lower species of trees in the first rows, and the higher kind rising towering behind them, so as to make the stranger think he is walking round a real hill, or betwixt two rising banks. As there is but little pleasure to the imagination, arising from this situation itself, so it should be contrived to give as much pleasure to the senses as possible : for this reason, the flowers should be sown in beds and parterres, to be the more obviously seen, and to throw out their sweets stronger into the air : fruits of the finest kinds should be spread through the compartments : the flowering shrubs should be planted in clumps, and assorted in their colours and flowers with all the nicety of a well made up flower-pot ; to strike with the stronger surprize : the trees should be all exotics, and of the rarest kinds :

kinds : and to create greater variety, though the Chinese form from its fantastical appearance, and the Corinthian order from its magnificence, be, in general, the properest for such an adorned garden ; yet buildings of all species under the sun, that have dignity in them, should here find place. In short, every agreeable object, that creates surprise, and that exhibits a view of magnificent art, should enter into the composition of such a garden. It is more proper, when in the neighbourhood of a great city, and thrown open to all the world, than when in a remote province ; and for that reason some of the French gardens have an excuse, which those at Stow have not.

A Garden, like this, is a kind of fairy land. It is in comparison of other Gardens, what an Opera is in comparison of a Tragedy : neither of them should be judged of by the ordinary rules of experience or taste ; but by the capricious ones of variety and fancy.

If these rules are just with regard to the four capital and distinct situations of grounds, it will be no difficult matter to apply them to all the variety of grounds, of which situations for gardens generally consist. It is but seldom that a situation, consistent with a single person's conveniency, is so precisely and particularly marked as any one of the four situations I have mentioned ; on the contrary, grounds generally consist of several of these situations, mixed and running into each other. In this case,

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the taste of the Gardener will appear, in proportioning his distribution and assemblage to that particular degree of resemblance, which the part, he is then laying out, bears to one or other of the four capital situations.

Nor in doing this need the Gardener be confined, if his ground is very various, by the fear of too quick a transition from one sentiment to another. The Gardens of Versailles are, not improperly speaking, a very large knot of very small Gardens, laid all to the side of each other; raising the continually repeated sentiment of surprise: yet these offend not from the quickness of the transition from one compartment to another; but because in some compartments no sentiment at all is created; and in others, it is too trivial to join in alliance with any sentiment of dignity whatever.

Could we suppose a great monarch lavishing his treasures, as it is said the emperors of China have done, in beautifying the face of nature; the most fortunate disposition of grounds for an attempt to perfection in this art would be, where there was a considerable flat, adjoining to the palace; where that flat runs into gentle unevennesses; where these unevennesses lost themselves in a romantic retired situation; and where that romantic situation again opened and extended itself into a view of awful, magnificent and simple nature.

It is a frequent error in our English gardens, that from the marble and gold and magnificence of a palace, we often step at once into all the wildness of the country. The transition from the extreme height of art to the extreme simplicity of nature is too strong. The French method of parterres, though too stiff, is perhaps preferable. But at any rate, a flat piece of ground, laid out, if not with all the stiffness, yet with all the ornaments of art, is the proper transition from a palace to a garden. If this again runs imperceptibly into the appearance of the country; then loses itself, as it goes farther from the house, in a retirement; and in the end swells into a view of great and simple nature: such a succession would be agreeable both to the natural progress of things, and the natural current of our ideas. Perhaps it is not too bold to say, that such a Garden, sliding by easy steps from the highest magnificence of art into the highest magnificence of nature, would be perfect.

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last little, it is generally considered the best, in a
mountain; and in the end, it leads into a view of the
mountain: such a situation would be a terrible pain
to the natural eye, and the natural eye
not our place. But it is not too bold to say that the
Garden, being by itself, from the highest mountains
comes of the into the highest mountains of nature.

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